

# Africa. Relevant or relegated? Find out at this year's Nedbank IMC 2022

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On 29 July, at the virtual Nedbank Integrated Marketing Conference (IMC) 2022, one of the stalwarts of South Africa's marketing scene, Thebe Ikalafeng, founder and chairman of Brand Africa and the Brand Leadership Group, will be asking an important question. Is Africa relevant or relegated?



Thebe Ikalafeng, founder and chairman of Brand Africa and the Brand Leadership Group

The Nedbank IMC's theme this year is: *Marketing. Is it relevant?* Ikalafeng is well placed to consider this question from a distinctly African perspective, having visited every country in the African continent and worked in more than twenty. "I think that as Africans," says Ikalafeng, "we are very ready to adopt the stance that our continent is relegated by the rest of the world. In certain instances, this is true. Think of the recent Covid-19 vaccination discrimination when we had poor access to the vaccine while other countries were stockpiling."

But this is not the whole story, he suggests. Africa is an enduring source of creative inspiration for other markets, from design to cuisine to culture and beyond. "We have a strong brand called Africa. It is an exciting time for us to push this brand," says Ikalafeng.

"But if I look at what we ourselves are doing, there is some concern. Of all the brands that Africans rate most highly, only 20% are made in Africa. We may even be buying international products with an African flair or flavour; essentially buying back an "Africa" that has been produced elsewhere! In so doing, are we complicit in relegating our own continent?"

Dale Hefer, CEO of the Nedbank IMC says that the conference has always encouraged critical and new ways of thinking. "Thebe's presentation will provide rich food for thought. He might prod us into considering our own assumptions as African marketers. But he'll undoubtedly inspire us, too."

Ikalafeng has a big personality, a wealth of knowledge about branding in Africa, and a critical, but ultimately positive, outlook on what we have to offer. His presentation at the Nedbank IMC 2022 will likely produce pure (African) gold. Don't miss it.

Virtual tickets are available at R1,999 (excluding VAT)

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